

Case 2797

***Scylliorhinus atlanticus* Koefoed, 1927 (currently *Apristurus atlanticus*; Chondrichthyes, Carcharhiniformes): proposed conservation of the specific name**

K. Nakaya

Laboratory of Marine Zoology, Faculty of Fisheries, Hokkaido University, Minato-machi, Hakodate, Hokkaido 041, Japan

B. Séret

Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Laboratoire d'Ichtyologie générale et appliquée, Antenne Orstom, 43 rue Cuvier, 75231 Paris cedex 05, France

Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the specific name of *Apristurus atlanticus* (Koefoed, 1927), which is currently in use for an Atlantic scylliorhinid (catshark). The name is threatened by the unused senior synonym *Scyllium?* *spinacipellitum* Vaillant, 1888.

1. Vaillant (1888, p. 60, pl. 1, figs. 3, 3a and 4) described two species of scylliorhinid sharks, *Scyllium?* *spinacipellitum* and *S. acutidens*, from deep waters off the Canary Islands. The types of these two species (MNHN 1884-384 and MNHN 1884-385) are preserved in the collection of the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris. Close examination of the type specimen (MNHN 1884-384) of *S. spinacipellitum* caused us (Nakaya & Séret, 1989, p. 977) to synonymize Vaillant's species with *Scylliorhinus atlanticus* Koefoed, 1927 (p. 18). It may be noted in passing that *Scylliorhinus* is an old unjustified emendation of *Scylliorhinus* Blainville, 1816.

2. The specific name *spinacipellitum* has never been used as a valid name since 1888. Bertin (1939, p. 68, footnote 1) mentioned the name in a catalogue of the type specimens in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle. Fowler (1967, p. 356) doubtfully included *S. spinacipellitum* in the synonymy of *Scylliorhinus canicula* (Linnaeus, 1758), and that synonymy was followed by Compagno (1984, p. 358; 1988, p. 122). We have been unable to find any other mention of the name *spinacipellitum*.

3. The name *Apristurus atlanticus* (Koefoed, 1927) has been used in such taxonomic works as Bigelow & Schroeder (1944, p. 22; 1948, p. 220), Bigelow, Schroeder & Springer (1953, p. 217), Cadenat & Maul (1966, p. 778), Springer (1966, p. 613; 1979, p. 14), Taylor (1972, p. 71), Nakaya (1975, p. 23), Cadenat & Blache (1981, p. 185), Compagno (1984, p. 261; 1988, p. 168), Gubanov, Kondurin & Myagkov (1986, p. 92) and also in popular books such as Ellis (1983), Reader's Digest (1986) and Springer & Gold (1989). Hence the name *A. atlanticus* is commonly used whereas *S. spinacipellitum* has almost never been mentioned. Use of the name *S. spinacipellitum* would cause confusion and disturb the stability of nomenclature for this species.

4. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:
 - (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *spinacipellitum* Vaillant, 1888, as published in the binomen *Scyllium? spinacipellitum*, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
 - (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *atlanticus* Koefoed, 1927, as published in the binomen *Scylliorhinus atlanticus*;
 - (3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *spinacipellitum* Vaillant, 1888, as published in the binomen *Scyllium? spinacipellitum* and as suppressed in (1) above.

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